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ABSTRACT

This paper identifies various goals for citizen monitoring groups concerned with the enforcement of rights that accompany racial desegregation, sex equality, and aid for the handicapped in schools, and presents recommendations for successful civil rights group monitoring. It is suggested that successful citizen monitoring requires: (1) establishing the monitoring group as part of the civil rights program; (2) recognizing different viewpoints of group members; (3) clearly specifying the extent of the group's authority; (4) developing appropriate monitoring structures; (5) choosing members carefully; (6) providing appropriate resources; and (7) presenting group reports to the school system. Four types of civil rights monitoring groups are identified according to the type of mandate imposed on them (statutory, political, educational, or social). The structures, resources, and strategies appropriate for each type, elements that might make for group success or failure, and specific recommendations for group success are discussed. In regard to the problems that monitoring groups may confront, it is held that effective group monitoring depends not only on following general strategies for success, but also on knowing a group's particular mandate and that mandate's implications. (Author/MJL)

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# "If It's Worth Doing, It's Worth Doing Well": Guidelines for Effective Citizen Monitoring of Student Civil Rights

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> The pace of any educational change approximates that of a wounded turtle. (Kunstel, 1979; p. 90)

> Whereas some peoples turn to God when a problem looms on the social horizon, and others turn to the state, Americans instinctively form a committee, elect a president and secretary-treasurer, and set about finding a solution. (Wolff, 1968; p. 127)

Combining these two quotations combined show why citizen monitoring groups are growing in number and significance in three arenas of civil rights in schools -- race desegregation, sex equity, and aid for the handicapped. Since the late 1960s, schools have come under increasing pressure from courts, federal agencies, and interest groups to ensure civil rights to their students. But whether through inability or unwillingness to change, schools have seldom satisfied the demands upon them. The actors involved have not even been able to agree on just what the schools have done, why, and how to proceed. Thus judges, the federal Office for Civil Rights (OCR), community activists, and schools themselves have sought help in figuring out what has been, and what remains to be, accomplished. One form of help is a committee such as a citizen monitoring body.

Since 1970, citizen groups have been established to oversee implementation of race desegregation plans in over twenty school districts. These groups range from a three-person Biracial Advisory Committee with no funding and a two-month life span, to elaborate networks of dozens of parents, social scientists, lawyers, educators, and community leaders, with hundreds of thousands of dollars of funding and an indefinite life span. Many communities now have groups formally set up to monitor compliance with laws and programs for sex equity and for ending discrimination against the handicapped. In

addition, hundreds of local and national groups are, without any formal mandate or recognition, keeping watch over schools and trying to induce them more fully to guarantee students' civil rights. By now, perhaps a majority of all public school children attend schools which have been monitored in some fashion by citizen groups concerned with civil rights compliance.

During 1979 and 1980, I studied eleven school districts with citizen groups monitoring race desegregation, eight districts with groups monitoring sex equity, and seven districts with groups monitoring aid to the handicapped. I and my associates read all available material and visited each district to interview from two to twenty people involved in the process of monitoring.

We found cities such as Cleveland in which the judge relies heavily on his monitoring group in ordering changes in the desegregation plan, and cities such as Dallas where neither the judge nor anyone else pay attention to the monitoring group. We found cities such as Fort Wayne, Indiana, where the schools are very sympathetic and responsive to groups that sought more aid for handicapped students, and cities such as Denver in which for years the school district fought the monitoring group every inch of the way. We found cities like Boston, in which various monitoring groups spend more time arguing with each other than overseeing the schools, and cities like Sacramento, in which several monitoring groups divide the labor and aid each other in perfect harmony. We found, in short, that setting up a monitoring group is only the beginning, that monitoring bodies can have no effect or can actually have harmful effects on students' civil rights if they do not work properly. Thus we realized that simply calling for more citizen monitoring is not much use until we know how monitoring should be done and what it should try to do.

From our full report (Hochschild and Hadrick, 1981a) and its summary and recommendations (Hochschild and Hadrick, 1981b), I have derived general recommendations for successful monitoring, identified various goals for civil rights

monitoring groups, and made specific recommendations for achieving each of these goals.[1] This article describes these goals and recommendations.

Monitoring Success and Failure

Before I can make recommendations, however, we must be clear on just what a monitoring body is, and what success and failure are. Formally, a monitoring group contains several citizens who are mandated to observe and report on the implementation of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, or court-ordered remedies for violations of the Fourteenth Amendment, for students in public schools, over a relatively long period of time, for a variety of issues. Groups vary in these characteristics of course, but all share them to some degree. The purpose of all monitoring groups is to enable their sponsor directly or indirectly to control the actions of the body being monitored. By "control" I mean constraint or shaping; monitoring is one tool for getting schools to behave in ways that they might not otherwise have done. It assumes, in short, that information can be power.

A monitoring group's success can be measured in three ways. From the least to the most stringent and global criterion, they are: 1) Did the group achieve goals that it defines as important? 2) Did the group achieve goals defined by its sponsor (e.g., a judge, OCR, the Women's Equity Action League [WEAL]) so that the sponsor was better able to induce civil rights compliance by the school district? 3) Did the group actually make the implementation of students' civil rights any easier or more successful than it would have been if the body had not existed? As the latter two criteria imply, community activists must beware of equating the ability of a group to conduct good research or rally community support with substantive policy achievements; monitoring success does not always lead to civil rights success.

Similarly, monitoring group failure may take several forms. The group may not understand its goal, or pursue the wrong goal. It may have insufficient

resources or backing from its sponsor; it may have an inappropriate structure, membership, or strategies. It may achieve symbolic success -- e.g., publishing reports, changing the racial or sexual composition of advisory committees, holding forums -- that substitute for real change. It may simply face an environment too hostile, rigid, or poor to permit much civil rights implementation at all. My recommendations suggest ways to avoid these forms of failure as well as ways to be effective.

Note, finally, that the typical American assumption that a high level of conflict indicates failure is probably wrong. Monitoring bodies are set up to help control school system actions as they implement civil rights requirements. Even gathering information is implicitly part of a strategy to constrain and shape school actions; if it were not, no policy-maker would bother to do it. Thus conflict between the school system and the monitoring body is inevitable and probably useful; if there were none, the monitors would be either superfluous or co-opted. The amount of useful conflict will vary according to the civil rights issue, community resources and sentiments, personalities of the actors, and so on. Too much conflict can be disastrous, but some is simply an indication that the monitoring body and its sponsor are doing their job.

General Recommendations

A monitoring body must be established carefully and coherently, as an integral part of the civil rights plan or court order. Too often monitoring groups are established casually or ignorantly, and they end up frustrated by internal contradictions and external obstacles which could have been avoided. The sponsor needs to know the circumstances of the particular school district, to understand the characteristics of the civil rights issue involved, to define clearly the proper role of the monitoring body, and to make sure that the mandate, structure, membership, resources and strategies of the group are both

appropriate to the circumstances and consistent with each other. The group should be set up before the plan goes into effect, so it can work out problems, establish procedures, and collect base-line data.

Two cautions should always be kept in mind. First, in civil rights issues, particularly race desegregation, emotions run high, ideologies are strong, perceptions are quickly skewed. No one can be a neutral observer. Monitoring groups, of course, are set up to try to alleviate this problem but they cannot be truly objective. Thus the sponsor should not rely solely on any single person's or group's interpretation of events. Monitors will inevitably be influenced by their own ideologies, ascriptive traits, methods of observation,and occupation. The sponsor should do everything possible to enhance the group's accuracy, but he should also remain open to alternative viewpoints and interpretations.

Second, sponsors sometimes, consciously or not, appoint monitoring groups in the hope that they will make the problem go away -- or at least remove it from the sponsor's desk to someone else's. In this situation the committee's apparent purpose is not its real mission, which is to give the people affected by the plan some entity other than the sponsor on which to focus their wrath, curiosity, and demands. The group may become a substitute for real oversight and change, or it may exhaust its energies fighting an unresponsive sponsor, or it may go off on its own track, dragging the unwilling sponsor along. None of these outcomes is desirable for anyone. Thus I recommend:

> A sponsor of a monitoring body should be prepared to spend as much, or more, effort on the issue being monitored as he would if no such group existed. A monitoring body is not a means of relinquishing responsibility; it is a means of helping a sponsor better perform his task.

Moving to more specific recommendations, the first requirement of a successful monitoring group is a clear <u>mandate</u> from its sponsor. Its wording

or formality is less important than a mutual understanding of the group's goals. Thus:

> The mandate should clearly state the body's mission, responsibilities, and authorities. The entire group should meet with the sponsor when necessary to ensure that everyone interprets the mandate similarly. The group should explain its mandate clearly and repeatedly to the public and schools.

The mandate should be both specific enough to have real content and flexible enough to give the group some autonomy in acting. I will discuss different types of mandates in the next section.

Without the authority it needs to carry out its mandate, a monitoring body is almost useless. Advisory bodies with no teeth have a long history in school politics, and with few exceptions they produce nothing but voluminous studies, disillusioned civic activists, embittered minoirites, cynical administrators, and frustrated teachers and parents. Therefore I recommend that:

> The sponsor must make it clear either that a monitoring group is purely advisory, or that the committee's findings will significantly influence his future relations with the school system. The sponsor must be prepared to back up the latter claim when necessary. Alternatively, the group must have clear and publicly known leverage to use directly when it sees the need.

Leverage can take many forms -- court orders, withholding of funds, political campaigns, pressure from businesses, student boycotts, parental protests, and so on. The right kind of leverage depends on the civil rights issue, local circumstances, the type of sponsor, and the problem being addressed. The right level of leverage depends on the same factors -- applying too much power can be almost as destructive as too little. Thus:

> The sponsor and group members should agree on (and preferably publicize

in advance) what level and kinds of leverage are appropriate in particular situations, and then use it when necessary. The kind and level of power agreed upon must be available and compatible with the body's mandate, structure, resources, and membership.

Structures appropriate to different types of monitoring bodies will be discussed in the next section. In general:

The sponsor and/or group chairperson should set up an appropriate structure before the group begins to work, so that internal procedural issues do not dominate the first weeks of the plan's implementation. They should organize subcommittees, recruit members and staff, allocate resources and authority within the committee, and set up meetings, research, and reporting procedures both within the committee and between it and non-members. Once the structures are established, they should be routinized quickly, and left in place unless there is an extremely strong reason for changing them. The structure should, however include mechanisms for change as well as some flexibility within it.

This is a call, not for rigidity, but for standard operating procedures. Monitoring groups consist of volunteers with different beliefs and skills, doing highly diffuse and innovative tasks in a volatile atmosphere. Each of these features contributes a strong centrifugal force; anything that can be made routine and non-controversial should be.

The focus and effectiveness of a monitoring group depends largely on the views and skills of its members. They must be chosen carefully to have enough, but not too much, diversity. To achieve this balance:

The sponsor should choose members who are committed to carrying out the civil rights court order or plan, whether or not they firmly believe in it. Members should be diverse enough in their methods of observation that many different kinds of knowledge are collected, but not so diverse

that they cannot agree on an interpretation of what they have observed. All actors in the process should be able to trust and respect at least some monitors. Thus group probably should have some educators, a considerable number of minority representatives, some members with standing in the business community, and so on. Perhaps each major actor should submit a list of candidates for the monitoring group to the sponsor, who then chooses among that list according to the above criteria and others discussed below.

The other main issue in choosing members is symbolic. Race, sex, place of residence, or class may have little to do with one's skill as an observer and reporter, but they are easy and convincing issues for skeptics to use in undermining monitoring body findings. Therefore:

The sponsor should be extremely sensitive to symbolic issues of place and length of residence in the community, having children in the public schools, socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, sex, and handicap in appointing monitoring group members. He should avoid appointing many people who are easily discredited on symbolic grounds.

No matter how skilled and appropriate the members, they can do little without resources. First, funding:

A sponsor must provide, or otherwise ensure, steady and reliable funding that the monitoring body can use as it sees fit and that has no implicit or explicit strings attached.

The amound of funds need not be large; a group may need money only for clerical help and supplies. With more money, of course, it can hire a professional staff, buy computer time, hold public forums and activities, travel, bring in consultants, reimburse school monitors, and so on. But its money must be assured, regular, and independent of its findings.

Second, a staff can make or break a monitoring group. It can gather and analyze information, organize events and daily routines efficiently, and support and

critique public members. It can also, however, create or fan dissension within the committee or between it and others, become a small bureaucracy with an agenda and momentum of its own, or interrupt committee communications with the schools, sponsor, and public. I recommend, therefore :

> The group should have at least a skeletal paid staff, probably chosen by and accountable to the group. Staff should be selected more for competence and acceptance of the committee's mandate than for personal or ascriptive traits. Both sponsor and public members should be very alert to potential problems with staff, and move to solve them early.

The accomplishments of both public members and staff will depend crucially on the group's leader. The chair must be able to weld a group of people with limited time and disparate constituencies, incentives, ideologies, background, and skills into a cohesive unit that can pursue only a few of its possible and desirable tasks. The chair must control the staff while leaving it enough autonomy to work; he or she must maintain good relations with the schools while insisting on certain demands; he or she must be a public spokesperson and link to the sponsor without violating the autonomy of individual members or usurping the role of the sponsor. Some necessary leadership skills vary among types of monitoring groups, as we will see in the next section, generally:

> The sponsor should be especially careful in designating the chair of a monitoring body. He or she must have public and private stature, strong leadership abilities, finely-tuned political instincts, and a commitment to give the time and effort necessary to lead a group of volunteers in a very delicate and difficult task.

Once the mandate, structure, composition, and resources of a body are in place, it must begin and maintain relations with the school system. The twin dangers here are co-optation and extreme adversarial relations. To achieve enough, but not too much, conflict:

Monitoring groups should submit reports to the school system for response before submitting them to the sponsor or making them public. The group should not be committed to making changes in the report, suggested by the schools, but it should somehow publicly acknowledge the schools' response. Monitoring groups should be alert to positive actions taken by the school system, and report successes as well as short comings. It should not tone down justifiable criticisms, however.

My other recommendations vary by the type of monitoring group, to which I now turn.

Types of Civil Rights Monitoring Groups

So far, I have assumed that civil rights monitoring is a single activity, that all groups do essentially the same thing except that some do it better than others do. My research shows, however, that that is not the case. I have found four different types of monitoring -- four goals and mandates that call for different structures, membership, resources, and strategies within the general outlines for success described above. This section identifies the four types, defines success and failure for each, and outlines particular recommendations to be added to the general ones.

First, monitoring can be a way to extend the range and depth of executive and judicial policy without increasing the number of civil servants (see Eisenberg, 1981). For a state education agency or OCR directly to oversee civil rights compliance in all school districts would be impossible without vastly increasing its size -- and even then problems of coordination and communication would be overwhelming. For a federal judge directly to oversee compliance with his court order would also be impossible without substantially restructuring the judiciary. But citizen groups under the close sponsorship of OCR or a judge can oversee the achievement of Constitutional mandates and then disband when their task is done.

Thus the first monitoring mandate is statutory -- to oversee compliance with

a court order or administrative regulation to end racial isolation, eliminate sex descrimination, or satisfy the needs of handicapped students. It focuses on obedience to the letter of the law or court order, generally by examining quantifiable actions such as transfers of students, staff, or funds. Success consists of providing reliable and extensive data to the sponsor about what is happening in the school system, and of evaluations and recommendations that neither distort the data nor constrain the sponsor. The greatest danger for such a group is likely to be abandoning its effort to be an objective, impartial observer and developing adversarial relations with the school system. In short, a statutory group must become and remain a good staff to -- "eyes and ears of" -- its sponsor.

Second, monitoring can be a way to involve more people and groups in the decisions and activities of schools. Schools are public institutions -- supported by taxes, headed by local residents, accountable ultimately to parents and society in general. Parents should have some say in how and what their children are taught; businesses and civic organizations should help to prepare their future employees and citizens.

Thus a second possible monitoring mandate is political -- to change the balance of power within the school system or to bring new actors and new resources to bear on civil rights problems. One subtype has a blue-ribbon political mandate; it seeks to get business, civic, religious, and cultural leaders involved in civil-rights related school programs, in the hope that they will use their skills, prestige, and resources to foster those programs. The second subtype has a grass roots mandate; it uses the committee's leverage to channel previously powerless people such as leaders of community or minority organizations into personnel, curriculum, disciplinary, and other school decisions.

Success for the blue-ribbon monitoring group consists of moving power horizontally -- getting previously uninvolved but powerful groups active in some school

policy. Success for the grass-roots group is moving power vertically -- getting previously involved but powerless groups active in school policy-making processes. The greatest danger for a political monitoring group is that its members will focus more on their own political goals and ambitions than on the civil rights issue per se. Blue ribbon committees may become preoccupied with internal jockeying or may use the schools to strengthen their own organization. Grass-roots committees may become engrossed in battling the school system in the pursuit of unrealistically great changes in race, gender, or class relations.

Third, monitoring can be a way to make sure that educational goals are not lost in the drive to comply with laws. No judge can fully understand the exigencies and needs of educators; no single set of regulations can be optimal for all school systems. No one wants blind obedience to hinder children's best interests, and yet we must not permit local exceptions to vitiate civil rights mandates. Monitoring groups are a way to apply general laws to specific situations, to bridge the gap between policy-makers and educators.

Thus a monitoring body mandate may be educational -- to make sure that ending discrimination also improves students' learning. The group may seek equal educational opportunity. Monitoring here means making sure that educational needs are always given priority over all other demands, and that each student has a full and equal chance to become educated. Monitoring group success consists of helping educators to put their professional training to its best use. The second subtype focuses on equal results; monitoring here means making sure that previously disadvantaged children receive enough compensatory treatment that they attain the same educational outcomes as other children. Success for such a group means changing the allocation of educational resources in order to benefit formerly deprived students.

With regard to educational goals, the greatest danger of an opportunity-oriented group is that it will be co-opted by the school system, so that it becomes an apologist for schools that cannot or will not change to meet civil

rights goals. For a results-oriented group, the greatest danger is that it will come to support continued segregation between advantaged and deprived groups, e.g. that it will relinquish desegregation in trade for compensatory programs in racially isolated schools.

Finally, monitoring can be a way for people to come together, work on common goals, develop new friends, and learn to understand and appreciate differences as well as similarities. One purpose of desegregation is to bring blacks and whites together; one purpose of sex equity is to bring men and women together; the main goal of civil rights for the handicapped is mainstreaming. Monitoring groups can themselves create ties and set examples; they can also help to ensure that schools truly integrate their students and teach each one the value of all.

Thus the fourth and final mandate may be <u>social</u> -- to improve relations among hostile or distant groups, to involve people from varied backgrounds in school activities, and to help minorities develop contacts and self-confidence within the dominant society. Success is acheived through fostering good internal social relations, developing networks across groups within the schools, providing physical and psychological protection for newly integrated students, and building community morale. Failure would occur if the desire for good social relations within the committee, or friendly but superficial activities and programs within the schools, blunt the edge of the committee's mandate to protect and boost formerly deprived students. The committee may be unable both to criticize discriminatory treatment and to encourage cooperation and respect, and it may drop the former task in favor of the much more enjoyable latter task.

The first step in making recommendations for different types of monitoring groups is to suggest which combinations are, and are not, compatible. No actual group will be a pure type as I just described them, but some mixes work much better than others. First, groups can easily combine mandates that seek

information and that require a neutral, uninvolved set of monitors. Thus statutory and equal opportunity educational mandates work well together. Conversely, groups can successfully combine mandates that require direct involvement by the monitors in the school system, so long as the actions themselves are compatible. Thus blue-ribbon political and social mandates can be combined, since both seek to involve powerful community leaders in the schools. Similarly, grass-roots political and equal-outcomes educational mandates work well together, since both seek to change the way schools are run and the people who run them. Groups should avoid, however, combining mandates if one focuses on information gathering and the other on direct action, and they should avoid combining action-oriented mandates if one seeks radical change in the school system and the other doesn't. Mixing incompatible mandates leads only to frustration and battles within the group, inconsistent communications with the schools, and headaches for the sponsor.

If the sponsor or group members seek a variety of incompatible goals, their greatest chance for success lies in setting up several citizen groups, each with a different mandate, membership, resources, and strategies. These groups should understand their boundaries and limits, and try to work closely together to reinforce each other's activities. Such a network can avoid intra-group conflict and the contradictions of switching from objective observer to passionate activist and back again. A network also gives the schools and community clear foci for different communications and claims. However, these groups run the risk of expending their energy in competition over resources, power, and mandates rather than in the pursuit of civil rights goals. To avoid such fights over turf, the sponsor should:

> Make sure that each group clearly understands and accepts its mandate and its relationship with the other groups; make sure that the

structures, resources, and members are appropriate for each group; build on existing groups; and avoid any ambiguity over allocations of new powers, resources, or objects for monitoring.

We come, finally, to recommendations for specific types of monitorin- full report I have room here only to outline them; for details and examples, (Hochschild and Hadrick, 1981a, 1981b).

A statutory monitoring group, whose role is to provide syste ute, jective information to its sponsor about compliance with a court ord d to needs access to school data and the assurance of its sponsor's backing get it. Its sponsor is likely to be a court, OCR, or state agency. structure should be relatively formal, with subcommittees determined by iss areas and a single chair and spokesperson with authority over the whole body. members should be experts on legal questions, data analysis, and policy implementation -- not necessarily representatives of the relevant minority or powerful and prestigious community members. It needs a fairly large and professional staff to collect, analyze, and evaluate data; it would also benefit from a group of volunteer, nonprofessional in-school monitors who are trained by the staff to observe and report accurately. It needs considerable funding, for staff salaries, computer time, and supplies. Its leader needs strong executive and analytic, but not necessarily political, skills. Its meetings and reports are instrumental more than expressive, and therefore may be closed to the public and targeted specifically to the sponsor's needs or wishes. Its strategies should include:

* A stance as objective, uninvolved observers of the school system;
* A minimum of expression of personal opinion and ideology, and a limit on recommendations, to the extent desired by the sponsor;
* A high degree of autonomy for the staff, especially in gathering and analyzing data, and a strong staff director;
* A single public spokesperson, who provides only as much publicity as

is necessary to legitimize the order or law to the public;

* Information gathering that is system-wide, verifiable, not focused on individual problems, and chosen in accordance with components of the court order or statute;

* A perception among members and staff that they are all the staff of the sponsor, and that their role is to evaluate compliance with the plan, not the merits of the plan itself;

* Formal presentation to the community, preferably in writing, of facts about the litigation or law and actions needed to comply with it.

A monitoring body with a political mandate is being asked to change the balance of power or amount of resources within the school system in order to foster programs or policies for student civil rights. A blue ribbon political group is likely to be sponsored by local community or business organizations, perhaps in conjunction with a court. Its main mandate is to bring resources and actors into certain school programs, so it needs access to school administrators with the authority to shape those programs. For example, businessmen on the group might help to design vocational classes and apprenticeships for minority students; museum and university employees might work on designing programs on women in American history or techniques for educating retarded students. Thus its structure should be loose and informal, with largely autonomous subcommittees organized according to the programs being developed. Its members need be neither members of the targeted groups or legal and analytic experts; they should be local elites, able to draw on their wide community contacts and organizational bases. The staff should be small and purely administrative. Funding can come from monetary and in-kind donations; the amount needed will vary according to the nature and extensiveness of the programs that group members develop. The chair should have great local status, but should facilitate a variety of activities more than dominate politically or analytically. Meetings and reports should be open to the public and schools as

well as to the sponsor; reports should be nontechnical and wide-ranging. Strategies include:

* Informal, cooperative, friendly relations with school administrators;
* Combining monitoring with recommendations and activism;
* A focus on developing substantive policies and programs rather than on decision-making;
* Pluralism and equal relations among committee members;
* Efforts to involve other community members and local organizations in new school programs;
* Using the promise of contributing scarce sources of time, money, and expertise as a "carrot" to induce school cooperation; and
* Cultivation of favorable media coverage of programs.

A Grass roots political group is more concerned with bringing previously powerless community residents into school decision-making processes that affect civil rights than with particular programs. It is likely to be sponsored by non-elite organizations and political groups seeking substantial change, and it is likely to focus more on specific problems and general procedures of implementation than on data-gathering or program development. It needs access to school staff and intra-school memos and policy documents, as well as assurance by the schools or sponsor that there will be no reprisals against committee members their constituents if controversies become acrimonious. Its structure should be informal, with subcommittees organized by either geographic area or system-wide decision-making processes. It needs a strong leader with great political skill and conviction, and with access to media coverage and the sponsor. Other members should be community residents, with a deep commitment to the civil rights issue and with wide connections and a good reputation in the community. The committee needs few if any local elites or experts, but it should be heavily weighted toward the group -- blacks, women, or handicapped -- which the civil rights issue addresses. The staff can be small and purely administrative; funding is needed only for supplies, public meetings and communications, and reimbursement for

poor group members. Meetings and reports should be open to the public and should make every effort to draw as many people as possible into the process. Strategies might include:

* A willingness to have confrontations when necessary with school administrators;
* A search for mutual support with some teachers and low-level staff;
* Combining highly qualitative monitoring with activism;
* Pluralism and equal relations among committee members;
* A focus on determining and redressing individual grievances rather than doing systematic analyses or developing new programs;
* Strong advocacy of civil rights goals with strong recommendations for implementation in committee reports; and
* Efforts to obtain and routinize citizen participation in school decisions.

Monitoring bodies with an educational mandate focus more directly on students' learning than do groups with the first two mandates; they view the civil rights implementation process as a way to improve the process of education (narrowly-defined) for formerly deprived students. A group that focuses on equal educational opportunities is likely to be sponsored by the school system itself; if so, it often includes in its mandate an effort to keep civil rights implementations, defined as student movement or new programs and policies, from disrupting on-going educational processes. Such a group needs access to school administrators and data, but it does not need much enforcement authority. Its structure should be relatively informal, with subcommittees often divided by grade level or special programs. The chair needs strong organizational and persuasive skills, as well as credibility with mainstream parents and educators. Its members should be respected, but not necessarily elite, local residents. It is likely to contain more educators than lawyers or policy analysts, and it should have some minority representatives although they need not dominate it. Its staff can be small and mostly administrative,

with some capability for data analysis. Its funding also can be minimal, and can be largely in-kind donations from the schools or local organizations. Meetings and reports should be open to the public but need not be extensively advertised; recommendations should be aimed primarily at the schools themselves, and should focus on the distribution of resources, discipline, and opportunities among students. Strategies might include:

* Cooperation and close communication with school officials at all levels,but especially in top administration;
* Objective data-gathering combined with recommendations,but not necessarily efforts to achieve those recommendations;
* A combination of system-wide observation on some issues with ad hoc individual problem-solving on others; and
* Efforts to institutionalize grievance and disciplinary procedures, to increase minority participation in extracurricular activities, and to alleviate educationally dysfunctional aspects of a court order, statute, or regulation on student civil rights.

A monitoring group with an educational mandate that focuses on equal outcomes more than on equal opportunities will be more adversarial than the group just discussed. It seeks to ensure that formerly deprived minorities leave school with the same education as other students -- even if that means that they must receive special treatment or remain separate from the dominant group. Sponsors of such a group are likely to be parents or other members of black, women's, or handicapped advocacy organizations. They need access to school data on student placement, student achievement, and resource allocation, as well as access to the people and processes that allocate students, teachers, and funds. The structure, membership, and staffing of this group can be the same as that of an opportunities-oriented group, except that the leader must be more politically powerful, deprived groups must be better represented, and members should be strong advocates of

significant change in the schools. In-school monitors would be a valuable addition to such a group. Funding can be slight, but must be entirely independent of the schools. Meetings and reports should be open and should actively seek community involvement. Group strategies might include:

* A willingness to engage in confrontations with the school system when necessary;
* Investigation of specific complaints or problems of deprived students combined with occasional system-wide analysis;
* Investigation of issues not specifically related to civil rights issues if they affect student achievement;
* Efforts to generate media coverage and community involvement, especially by parents and deprived groups;
* Efforts to become involved in the implementation process as well as to make recommendations;
* Monitoring within schools and classrooms of daily activities; and
* An effort to develop institutionalized procedures for compensation to deprived students as long as necessary.

Finally, a monitoring group with a social mandate focuses more on the extent and quality of interaction among groups than on the substance of legal, political, or educational changes in schools. A social group is likely to be sponsored by community organizations and middle-of-the-road minority advocacy groups. It needs access to school administrators and perhaps teachers, and authority to sponsor programs or events. Its structure should be informal, with subcommittees organized by activity or program area, and a leader skilled at negotiation and facilitation. Multiple spokespersons seem appropriate. Members should be respected community members with widespread connections but not necessarily any professional expertise. They should be evenly divided among the groups in question, with each subcommittee perhaps co-chaired by a black and a white, or a man and a woman, or a handicapped

and non-handicapped member. The group can be quite large (e.g., over 20), but should have only a skeletal staff for administrative purposes. Funding should be great enough to permit the development of new programs and frequent community and school activities. Meetings and reports should be seen more as opportunities for community involvement than as the instruments to achieve any particular goal. Only in one area should the social monitoring group seek particular results -- that of investigating and solving complaints by formerly deprived groups of discrimination, hostility, or danger. Strategies for such a group should include:

* Working closely with all levels of the school system, avoiding adversarial relations in most cases;
* A willingness to be more confrontational on issues which affect the safety or status of formerly deprived sutdents;
* Mixing observation with making recommendations, devising remedies, and helping to implement them;
* Efforts to achieve wide and favorable media coverage;
* A focus on school-by-school observation responding to problems as they arise, combined with some system-wide monitoring of special programs and of treatment of formerly disadvantaged students;
* Commitment to good community relations more than strong advocacy of a particular civil rights goal; and
* The development of informational and reference services, for example on job openings, on higher educational options and scholarships, or on the achievements of local minority personages both historically and currently.

Thus monitoring groups need to not only follow general strategies for success, but also to ascertain their particular mandate and its implications. Only by such conscious and careful organization can monitoring groups be effective in the face of the great odds against them, which are the subject of the concluding section.

Conclusion: The Structural Contradictions of Monitoring

Monitoring, in all its variations, can be enormously helpful in implementing civil rights in schools. A monitoring group gives courts and regulatory agencies a greater ability to enforce their mandates; it gives schools a chance to fit the mandate to local circumstances; it gives citizens an chance to shape crucially important and complex institutions; it facilitates true integration. However, monitoring also has built-in frustrations and conflicts, which must be confronted if a group hopes to be effective. Consider the following argument: To achieve their mandates, monitors need many resources, which are granted by different actors in the implementation process who are independent of one another. If two such actors are adversaries, the more one gives of the resources under its control to the monitoring body, the more the group will be perceived as a tool of that actor, and the fewer the resources that the other will give. Thus, to take the simplest case, a court can give its group a mandate, funding, staff, leader, members, and the promise of judicial backing if necessary. But it cannot give the body information or legitimacy in the schools -- only the schools can do that. And when court and schools are locked in a bitter fight, the more resources the court gives, the more that the schools withhold.

The core dilemma is that a small set of resources are all necessary but not sufficient by themselves effectively to monitor civil rights compliance, and these resources are controlled by separate actors who are likely to be antagonistic to one another or to monitoring. These core resources are: 1) mandate, authority, and members, controlled by the sponsor; 2) information, controlled by the school system; and 3) community support or at least acquiescence, controlled by parents and other local residents.

The strategies for getting enough of these three essential resources depend on circumstances. If the school district is the sponsor or agrees with the sponsor, the community is also likely to be supportive. Thus the monitoring body is able

simply to work cooperatively with all actors. This situation most often occurs in groups dealing with aid to the handicapped. Such a circumstance is the most desirable -- but it also is the one in which monitoring is least necessary and perhaps least forceful. If the school district and/or the community disagrees with the sponsor on civil rights goals or the means to achieve them, the monitoring body has two options to be effective. It may be very politically astute, and work hard to persuade all actors to give it the resources it needs. This situation is the most common one in sex equity cases. Or it may rely heavily on a sponsor who has and will use the power needed to force the schools and community to cooperate with the monitors. This circumstance is most likely to occur in race desegregation cases, and it is the situation in which monitoring is the hardest to do effectively and the most important to do effectively. My last recommendation for an effective monitoring group is, therefore, that the sponsor must:

> Ensure that all actors will give the monitoring body the resources it needs; or give the monitoring body a leader, members, and other resources that will help it be persuasive to schools and community residents; or give the monitoring body the backing it needs to force the schools and community to give it essential resources. This choice will depend on local circumstances and the issue being monitored. The sponsor and monitors should adjust their expectations accordingly. The first situation makes effective monitoring most likely; the second situation makes it possible but uncertain; and the third situation makes it extremely difficult, though not impossible.

Remember, there are no definitive rules on what to monitor and how to do it. The choice of mandates, resources, and strategies, and the reasonable levels of expectation and leverage all depend on the kind of civil rights being monitored and the degree of enthusiasm or hostility among the actors. Monitoring is not a way to make a problem go away; it can be a way to help citizens participate in their schools

and to make schools and governments respond to deprived minorities, women, or handicapped students.

Footnotes

1. The full report, which includes descriptions of twenty-five monitoring groups, and its summary and recommendations, are available for $12.00 or $3.00 respectively (to cover the cost of copying) from Jennifer Hochschild, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey 08544.

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